

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
OF TRING TOWN COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THE MARKET
HOUSE, TRING ON MONDAY 7th APRIL 2014 AT 8.10 p.m.**

Present: Councillors: J. Allan, in the Chair
B. Batchelor
S. Hearn
N. Nutkins
Mrs R. Ransley

Co-opted Members: Mr R. Wallis (Tring Allotments Association)
Mr J. Savage (Ramblers Association)
Ms Greta Brown (Chiltern Society)

Also present: Cllr M. Hicks
Mr M. Curry, Town Clerk
1 member of the public

17320. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the Councillor G. Roberts (prior commitment), and Mrs B. Kazer (Tring Environmental Forum/Tring in Transition) (Illness)

17321. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

17322. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2013 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

17323. MATTERS OF REPORT FROM THE MINUTES

17163 – Reports from Co-opted Members – Tring Allotment Association.

- The Contractor delivering compost does have a key
- The replacement Dog Bin. No funds available from Dacorum. Will try again now that we are in the new financial year

17166 – Millennium Wood

- The work with respect to the new trees has been completed through the splendid efforts of Cllrs Hearn & Hicks
- Chestnut pailings are being installed where there are gaps in the hedges
- The guards round the trees in the wood have been removed as per the report

All other items covered by items on the agenda

17324. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

None

17325. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Standing Orders were suspended by resolution at 8:14 pm.

There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

Standing Orders were restored by resolution at 8:14 pm.

17326. REPORTS FROM CO-OPTED MEMBERS (not covered elsewhere)

(i) General Reports from Co-opted Members

Mr R. Wallis (Tring Allotments Association):

- That notice of inspections be given was requested

Ms G. Brown (Chiltern Society)

- Whilst the completion of the new car park for Tring Park/Natural History Museum has been delayed, it will be open temporarily during the Easter Holidays

(ii) Specific Reports:

1. *The condition of footpaths in and outside Tring, signposting and encouraging use.* Mr Savage reported that generally the state of the pathways was good and he reported any decline in standards to Dacorum Borough Council. It was agreed that the Chiltern Society pathway map was good and that it would be better to encourage its wider availability rather than produce another map. A link to the Definitive Pathway Map would be put on the Town Council's website.

2. *The potential to enhance the town environment by small scale planting*

The Clerk reported an update sent by Mrs B. Kazer:

- Tring in Transition has worked with the Friends of the Memorial Garden and Dacorum Borough Council to plant wildflowers on the West bank
- Tring in Transition is happy to continue planting wildflowers at places around town. Choice of site depends greatly on the possible ongoing maintenance. This usually involves cutting down in late July or August. Therefore chosen sites ideally will be under the control of the Town Council rather than Dacorum Borough Council or Hertfordshire County Council

3. *An update on the planned 2015 Eco Fair*

Tring in Transition formally thanked Tring Town Council for the grant of £700.00 towards the April 25th 2015 Eco Fair. They have been in contact with Tring Together and have discussed possibility of joint advertising and the use of the Tring 700 year logo. We have started to consider stall holders. The criteria will be at our discretion but generally:

- Entry free for all visitors
- Refreshments free for all visitors
- Donation boxes set prominently around
- Stalls free but asked for donation
- Stalls for schools to be free
- Include schools with eco-councils, and/or demonstrate active food growing but not schools just because they are local
- Provide local people with a spread of information and resources on local, eco-friendly initiatives and on nearest suppliers of sustainable standard products

4. *Increasing membership of the Allotment Association to a majority of plot holders (Allotment Society)*

When allotment rents are paid and new plots let, plot holders are given a letter from the association detailing the benefits of membership. To raise the profile of the Allotment Association attendance at events such as the Eco-fair and the Farmers Market was suggested.

17327. ALLOTMENTS MANAGEMENT:

(i) To receive a report from the Deputy Town Clerk on allotment lettings

The Committee noted the report circulated prior to the meeting. The poor weather was probably a significant factor behind the inspection finding many plots to be under cultivated. Lack of a waiting list lessens pressure to evict tenants, unless the state of the plot begins to affect those neighbouring it.

(ii) Allotment Vacancies and how this could relate to possible New Mill Vegetable Patch Holders displacement

Cllr Allan explained how this item arose through the possible Section 106 agreement relating to the development at the site of the New Mill Community Hall.

Resolved: To make allotment space available at Bulbourne for those displaced by the possible development at New Mill

(iii) To receive a verbal report from the Town Warden

The Clerk reported on the work that the Town Warden had completed at the allotments was predominately clearance to assist Cllrs Hearn & Hicks's work on the boundary hedge. The guards on the trees in the Millennium Wood had been removed in accordance with the guidance received as a result of the inspection.

(iv) Permission to light Bonfires on the Allotments

The Clerk outlined the series of complaints received from residents about bonfire smoke throughout the last year and how allotment holders had been asked to show consideration. After a discussion it was agreed, reluctantly, to impose a ban – common in the majority of local allotment sites – on lighting bonfires, but in so doing the Council would make arrangements for periodic collection of non-compostable materials.

Resolved: To ban bonfires on Duckmore Lane Allotments. Councillor Hearn to liaise with the Town Warden on arrangements for periodic collection of non-compostable materials.

17328. ALLOTMENT SECURITY REVIEW & CAR USE

Cllr Allan updated Members on abuse of vehicular access.

- Resolved:** (i) To padlock all access points and to remind plot holders that a key can be obtained from the Deputy Clerk
(ii) That the Clerk produces a simple newsletter for allotment holders including details of the decisions taken at this meeting and associated actions

17329. AN INDUCTION SCHEME FOR NEW PLOT HOLDERS

The suggestion was welcomed. The Allotment Association to recruit volunteers to act as mentors then liaise with the Deputy Clerk when plots are let.

17330. DACORUM LOCAL FOOD INITIATIVE – UPDATE ON POSSIBLE USE OF BULBOURNE ALLOTMENTS SPACE

The Committee supported the principle of the scheme, but would like to receive a presentation of the details before finally committing to it.

Resolved: That the Clerk ask arrange the presentation on the local food initiative for the next meeting of the Committee

17331. PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP GRANTS 2014

The Clerk advised the installation of the signposts was imminent. Once completed next year's application to PPP could be made. The Clerk had been approached by Wigginton with regard to a joint application with respect to footpath 80. Mr Savage considered that whilst this short section does get muddy it should be done as part of Dacorum Borough Council's general improvement work.

Resolved: That the Committee's priority for PPP funding remains improving signage

The meeting closed at 9:10 p.m.

Chairman